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LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

More bills were introduced this week and a significant number of the new bills pertain to health issues. Among the many bills introduced this week were bills dealing with tax credits, criminal justice bills pertaining to "three strikes" and terrorist threats, unemployment benefits compensation, and legislation pertaining to elected officials.

LEGISLATIVE DEADLINES

- January 25 - Last day to submit 2002 bill requests to Legislative Counsel.
- Last day for any committee to hear and report to the "Floor" (the Assembly or Senate chambers) bills introduced in their house in 2001.
- January 31 - last day for each house to pass bills introduced in 2001 in their house.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Legislative committees continued to meet this week in order to meet the above deadlines.

The Assembly Judiciary Committee met Wednesday, approving a bill ([AB 1703](#)) to clean up and clarify last year's bill ([AB 913](#)) requiring firms which contract with the state to provide legal services to agree to make a good faith effort to provide a specified minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services during the term of the contract, and killing legislation ([AB 881](#)) relating to secret settlements. On Tuesday, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved legislation ([SB 355](#)) to permit suits for construction defects that pose a

danger to occupants if a catastrophic event were to occur.

In addition, the budget subcommittees of both houses met jointly on Thursday in response to Governor Davis's request to reduce current year expenditures by \$2.2 billion. The committees met to address specific cuts proposed by the governor, which targeted unexpected funds from the 1990-00, 2000-01-02 fiscal years.

The proposed budget reductions, which includes previously approved funds for the trial court information technology upgrades, are contained in [SB 1 \(3x\)](#) by Senator Steve Peace, chair of the Senate Budget Committee. The purpose of holding simultaneous Senate and Assembly Budget subcommittee hearings is to expedite the final approval of a budget reduction package. Each passing day deepens the budget crisis to the extent that anticipated expenditure savings may not be realized to the fullest extent.

THE RUMOR MILL

According to newspaper accounts, Assembly Member [Darrell Steinberg](#) will become the new chair of the Assembly Appropriations Committee, leading to speculation as to his successor as chair of the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Two names often mentioned to be the new chair are [Ellen Corbett](#) (D. San Leandro/Hayward) and [Hannah-Beth Jackson](#) (D. Santa Barbara/Ventura).

A workers' compensation deal may be coming soon. Senate pro Tempore John Burton has been meeting with Governor Davis's cabinet secretary and a bill resembling Senator Burton's SB 71 and Assembly Member Thomas Calderon's AB 1176 could emerge.